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MASTER LIGHTS

MASTER LIGHTS

BY

MRS. WILLIAM LOWELL PUTNAM

Those shadowy recollections,
Which, be they what they may,
Are yet the fountain light of all our day,
Are yet a master light of all our seeing;
Uphold us, cherish, and have power to make
Our noisy years seem moments in the being
Of the eternal Silence.

Ode on the Intimations of Immortality
WORDSWORTH

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FOREWORD

We are launched on the great adventure of life without either will or knowledge on our part — and a great adventure it certainly is from the moment we begin it until we pass out of it at the other end. How intensely dramatic is our entrance! Few subsequent events in life could compare with it had we but been wholly conscious at the time, but fortunately, perhaps, we are somewhat rudimentary at birth and fail to appreciate its intensity, and the idea of that on which we are embarked dawns upon us so gradually that habit has dulled the edge of attention before we realize ourselves at all.

We start on this great adventure without experience and without training, and, as at the beginning, so throughout life, we must meet our problems alone. We can

only make attempts, and whether or not they are successful we do not know until later, and perhaps not then, for "only the Master shall praise us and only the Master shall blame."

My only excuse for publishing these little essays is that they are the offspring of the attempts to meet the problems that came to me as they came — some from the facts of life, some from an urge of my inner self; and that they may perhaps be of a little help to others who find themselves unable to do and think just what those around them are doing and thinking — for this tends toward a great loneliness — it is not, however, an all-alone-ness, for there are many of us if we can but find one another — more, I believe, than we imagine.

ELIZABETH PUTNAM

February, 1924

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MASTER LIGHTS

ON FRIENDSHIP

A FRIEND of mine used to say that when she ceased to be able to have friends anywhere from two to eighty years old she should think it time for her to die. She died in the heyday of friendship, for "whom the Gods love die young." Her years were neither few nor many, but whatever they might have numbered she would always have been young, for she had a genius for friendship — and real friendship keeps us from ever growing old.

Friends are of all sorts as well as of all ages. Wherever there is mutual helpfulness there is friendship. The friendship between workers of head and hand,

between employer and employee, is often a very beautiful one. The helpfulness need not be equal between friends, but it must come in a measure from both. It may be of a more material or of a more spiritual nature, but, unless there is some touch of the spirit accompanying the material, it is not friendship, but merely barter or dole. The spirit's touch may be no more than the human fellowship which some dear souls put into their least act,

> "Not what we give, but what we share,
> For the gift without the giver is bare."

So long as this touch is there, the gift is not the only thing shared, the fellowship is shared too — there is a taste of friendship.

The different parts of us have their special friends. One friend we like to go to picture galleries with, another increases

our pleasure in a beautiful sunset. How strange that so often the enjoyment of nature and of art fail to exist together! I suppose it is because neither is exceptionally keen in the friends in question — yet better by far that they should lack keenness than have a false edge of enthusiasm which blunts at the first test. Of all detestable people to do things with, the fakir admirer is the worst! Some friends we have over books, some to compare ideas with, and some who rest the heart with their affection; but how rare it is to find a friend who fulfills our every need for friendship. Blessed, indeed, are we if one or two are given us in a lifetime.

Unfortunately, we can seldom combine the wonder of a perfect friendship with the glow of heart which belongs peculiarly to the affections of our childhood —

the satisfying sense of something that has been ours all our lives. That glow will always come from these old friends, but seldom are they and we fitted perfectly to one another. We were friends because of our parents' friendships, because of propinquity, because of age, what you will, and we shall always love them, but we do not go to them either to stimulate or to rest our souls. They were of the number whom we called in childhood our "best" friends — one at a time, of course. We used superlatives then because we had not learnt that the positive is so rare — so perfect that no superlative could exceed it.

As we grow older, we grow so much broader in our sympathies that our friends increase enormously in numbers— there is no bar to friendship except that it

must be joined to respect. But with this breadth goes also greater depth, else we grow shallow; and so we give more to our friends and crave more of them. When we find a friend who turns to us, to whom we also turn, for help, for understanding, for love, for calling out our best only to make it better, we can but grapple them to our souls in great humility and with pæans of thanksgiving.

ON LOVE

THE hearts of those that love are but reflections of the Infinite Love of God, for, though there be in them much of imperfection, there is the exhaustlessness also of Infinite Love.

The heart of a friend is never burdened, neither is it troubled by our laying our burden and our trouble in it; neither is it ever pained by our silence.

ON BEING YOUNG

"Grow old along with me!
The best is yet to be,
The last of life for which the first was made."
BROWNING, "Rabbi Ben Ezra."

YOUTH is divided into two types, those who want to linger along the flowery paths of the springtime of life, and those who are impatient to begin to do a man's (this term is used here to denote the genus, not the sex) work, eager to measure their strength with the best. Did I say two types? — rather I should have said of both sexes that

"You never see two alike at any one time,
And you never see one alike twice" —

for in youth what we feel one day is no surety of what we shall feel the next. This is especially true of the period of adolescence, but the dawn of adolescence

"fades" only very gradually into "the light of common day."

How beautiful the dawn is! Its colours are so delicate, so full of exquisitely tender beauty and promise. "Thou makest the outgoings of the morning and evening to rejoice." Youth is made for joy, but then so is all of life. Do not let us underrate that "common day" which follows youth; do not let us be blinded by the fact that it is common; for are not all the best things common? The sunshine and the rain, the wind and the stillness of the hour just after the sunset, when comes that wonderful hush which is all the deeper for the occasional sleepy note of a distant bird's good-night. The light of common day is after all the light that we see the great world by. The moonlight and the stars and even the

dawn show us things but dimly, but the light of day makes all things clear. It seems to me that the reason we see the truth but imperfectly even in the daylight is because our minds are like prisms and break up the light into the colours of which it is formed. We see, each one of us, but a part and often a different part from our neighbour. If only all our colours were pure, they would together make the white light of truth, but unfortunately the colours are often muddied by passing through dirty minds, and one spoiled colour prevents the whole from making anything approaching the dazzling whiteness of the truth. Our nearest approach is often at best a dull drab. But that, as Kipling says, is another story; we were talking of youth.

To take the first type: those who never

want to grow any older. I have known some very young people who wanted always to stay school-children. I was never affected in that way myself, but then they were studious as well as young. I don't think most young people want to stay quite so young as that; they simply want to stay where they can still play, for it's such fun to play! Of course it is fun — a kind of fun every one but a fossil needs and something that one becomes a fossil without. The difficulty with our outlook when we are young is that it is necessarily rather lacking in experience. We cannot imagine that older people need play, or that they get it, because their ways of playing are rather different from ours. We can understand the children's play because we have been there, and we know that the kind of play we have now

is much more amusing than theirs, and that we shall ever outgrow it seems to us impossible. We don't believe that "the best is yet to be," although we have already found it so. Well! it does not matter very much except to us, for the hands of the clock will not be stayed however much we want to stop them. To us it does matter, however, sometimes a very great deal, for it robs us of that buoyant faith in the future which should be youth's heritage — that faith which is "the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen."

The second type — those who want to hurry life along, to get somewhere that they are not, to try something new — are not usually so happy as the young should be. They do not "rejoice." Perhaps they are misfits as so many of us are at times, especially when young. Perhaps the

cares of life have come on them too early. They will not find it so difficult to believe that the best is ahead of them, for it sometimes seems that things could hardly be worse than they are.

Spring is the time of growth when the warm earth buds and blossoms and the winds from the cold sea blow over it, and very raw winds they seem in the lassitude that often follows rapid growth. It must always be so. Nature's equilibrium must be kept up. Youth like spring is not the time of pure joy that it is painted and its pain is all the more poignant because in youth we have so little perspective. Yet even the young look back on childhood—though such a recent past to them—with the charm of the morning mist upon it. They forget that the mist was often very chilly even then. They do not realize that

the noontide sun is still warmer than the morning — too warm, perhaps, sometimes, but very beautiful and very fruitful withal — and that the colours of the evening are quite as beautiful and more brilliant than those of dawn.

"I have been young and now I am old," and in spite of much illness and some sorrow I can only feel that life grows always more worth living. Of course the buoyancy of body and limb is not what it was, but that counts for so little if only the soul keeps young, and the spirit of youth is ours for the striving!

"Grow old along with me!
The best is yet to be,
The last of life for which the first was made.
Our times are in His hand
Who saith, "A whole I planned;
Youth shows but half; trust God; see all nor be afraid."

BROWNING, "Rabbi Ben Ezra."

ON GROWING OLD

How strange it is to think of ourselves as growing old — quite impossible, indeed.

Older people grew old naturally enough because they were just "older people." They always had been older people, anyway, and grew old like anybody else. But we were young when they grew old — we always had been young. It was sad to see them, for we loved them, but the sadness was the lot of man; it was not strange — they had watched the generation before them go in the same way. We took their places at the front. It was strange to do that, for we had never been in the front rank before and we were still young, with an added dignity, to be sure,

quite too great for us — but rather amusing, partly because it was so odd.

We feel just as young now. They tell us that we must not run for trains — that no one of our age should do such things; but on a pinch we sometimes try it and for a short spurt we are still fairly fleet of foot. We don't do it often, but then we have not for a great many years, because it did not look very dignified even if we were still young. The adding of years to one's youth requires the addition of a certain decorum.

But every now and then, just when we are feeling particularly in sympathy with the younger generation, rather deferring, perhaps, to their superior knowledge in many things which we have never fully grasped, we get a little shock — a peep behind the scenes of their minds through

a chance allusion. We had been suggesting, for instance, that the character of a casual young acquaintance was not above reproach and are met by the defense, "But he's really unusually nice to his old cousin — much nicer than most young people are to old ones." The "old one" in question is not only somewhat our junior, but considered peculiarly agreeable both by old and young. At first hearing we are struck as by a blow amidships. Do the young condescend to us because of our age? Are they being just kind when we thought them interested? Heaven forbid! We are not yet objects of charity. And then later — on partial recovery from that blow, which we have concealed beneath a smile that we hoped looked complacent — comes the wonder if youth to-day looks on life so differently

from our generation! We think that when we were young what we cared for in people was that they should be interesting. Young people were generally more interesting than older ones because they were so alive, so eagerly trying to understand this odd world; but if we chanced on an older person who instead of crystallizing had kept on trying to understand — why, that person was more delightful to talk to than a young one could possibly be, because to the eagerness of youth was added the charm of experience and maturity. Did we really feel so? Was this a quality of youth in our day? I wonder. And if it was, is it not just as much a quality of youth to-day? Perhaps our sense of proportion gave out, was knocked out by the blow we received. Perhaps it was only a casual remark made as so

many are to conceal real agreement with our criticisms of the youth in question — we all rise to the defense of those attacked, especially if they belong to our class rather than to that of the disparager. If we feel any doubt of this, try telling a man that men are the worst offenders in lingering round after saying good-bye — instance an example or two, and watch the reaction. The most impossible statements will be made in refuting our charge — and with perfect conviction.

The seeming difference in our attitude of mind in youth and that of the younger people to-day comes, I believe, from the fact that they are franker, more outspoken in their criticism. They say many things which we thought but never should have dreamed of saying to the generation ahead of us. Does not this very frankness

indicate a greater understanding between the generations? Is it not all to the good? Indeed, is it not a very real compliment to our open-mindedness — subtly disguised truly, but still there. Sometimes we may sympathize with the man who said, "Perhaps it was right to dissemble your love, but why did you kick me downstairs?" But that is only in moments of discouragement. The younger generation and their children are going to do better with their lives than we have done with ours if only they will give themselves and them time enough to think. Incessant occupation may be a danger.

And so the very attitude of the younger people toward us keeps us young, for youth consists in great measure in readiness to receive new impressions, and willingness to change our viewpoint to one

which we can see is better. As long as we can do that, we shall not grow old, only older, and that we have done ever since we were born — even our grandchildren are doing that.

ON DEATH

In the "Atlantic Monthly" for May, 1923, Dr. J. D. MacKenzie gave an extraordinarily interesting account of his experiences in dying, which he maintained he had done, for all the purposes of experience, as many as nine times. As, according to his definition of dying, I have done it more than thrice as many times, I was interested to check up his experience by my own.

My attempts at dying as the result of an accident are limited to one, and that one certainly corroborates all that Dr. MacKenzie says. There was no discomfort and no fear, although it was perfectly evident to me that the accident was coming and was inevitable. I was on a horse, on a slippery plank road, when all of his

legs took occasion to slip simultaneously. No recovery was possible, but the only thought that crossed my mind, before my head struck the gatepost and "oblivion ensued," was that it was fortunate that his legs were going out to the left and therefore he would not fall on mine. The horse was strange, the place was strange, the action strange, and only the fact that I had the bad habit of kicking off my shoe without untying it and that it therefore pulled off of my foot when it clung to the old-fashioned stirrup, saved me from being dragged, unconscious, and waking up in the next world instead of this.

My other experiences are those of dying from hemorrhage and under operation. Of course what he says is doubtless true that these "yielded no recollection of the instant or event of departure." I have

no doubt that the actual moment when consciousness goes is, as he says, "like the parting of a spider's web" but the moments which precede the event and should be accounted part of it are not necessarily so smooth and simple as his. Dying of hemorrhage is an extremely unpleasant feeling, it is like nothing so much as that which we have been accustomed to consider as the sensation of dying. I have had a great deal of pain first and last and have found it to be of two kinds, bearable and unbearable (which often has to be borne all the same), but I believe that no pain I have ever felt equals in hideousness dying of internal hemorrhage. I repeated the experience many times in one night and found the "coming to" perfectly peaceful — but the "going off" as I have described.

Dying under operation is also an unpleasant experience. This I have tried with a variety of anæsthetics and with different anæsthetizers — and my experience covers fifty years and a great many different circumstances. Anæsthetics are given now very much better than they used to be, and I am not sure that there is actual physical discomfort in going under, but, although I have done it so many times, I never take even gas without an unreasoning feeling which I take to be terror. It affects one physically and is very disagreeable.

Lying quietly after just escaping death, waiting for strength enough to undergo an operation whose exact severity no one can foretell, but of whose great seriousness no one can doubt, is a very strange and interesting experience. At first it

seems impossible to wait — your instinct is so naturally to get disagreeable things over as quickly as possible. It may mean the end. What of that! It may mean a consciousness of more and greater illness. At best it means great discomfort — probably a large measure of pain. No matter! It will at least mean knowledge of how to trim your sails — of the port which is your immediate destination. But it is strange how, as day succeeds day and week follows week, peace settles down upon you and restlessness and impatience subside. After all the hardest thing in life is deciding what path among the many to follow, and when there is but one, that difficulty is removed.

The peace that comes under such circumstances comes as calmly, as quietly as the dew on the flowers at evening. It

is your evening. You may or you may not wake to another day. The dew is there and a wonderful thing it is. It seems rather to be distilled from something within than to settle on you from without. I think it must be the "Peace of God — which passeth all understanding." Why it should be there certainly passes understanding, but there is no doubting the fact.

Under such conditions you gather from the past all that your memory has stored up, particularly things of courage, for it is not consolation that you want now — you are resting and preparing for a great fight and you need armour, well fitted to you and firmly girt on, armour that has been tried and tested.

In my own case out of the penumbra of fragments that floated up in my mind,

three things particularly took shape and welded themselves into breastplate, helmet, sword and shield. These three things in order of the help they gave were first the lines from the Epilogue to "Asolando" by Browning —

"One who never turned his back, but marched breast forward,
Never doubted clouds would break,
Never dreamed, though right were worsted, wrong would triumph,
Held we fall to rise, are baffled to fight better,
Sleep to wake."

Next Mrs. Browning's sonnet on "Work," and last, Tennyson's "Crossing the Bar."

In thinking of death I have never, that I can recall in my life, had a feeling of finality in connection with it. Hence I greatly prefer the use of the word "dead" to any substitutes, such as "passing away," for not only is their use mawkish — like calling legs "limbs" or spades

"agricultural implements" — but they convey the idea of departure instead of a mere change. Death has sometimes seemed, as Dr. MacKenzie calls it, "a blessed sweet release," but never the end of anything but a phase of existence; and, furthermore, it has never seemed to me that we could cease to know and care for all that happens to those still living their lives here.

There is, of course, no logical reason for this belief, unless we believe in Divine Love; but if we hold to that — and such a belief is altogether as reasonable as atheism — it seems to follow from it as daylight follows the dawn. That the spiritual presence of those who have died should require to be brought about through the presence of mediums or made known through them is an incredibly

repugnant idea to me. It is such a vulgarizing of the spiritual, such an impertinence, indeed. Why should need be for a go-between for us and our friends, because "the veil of the flesh" is removed? We require no medium in communion with God — why should it be required between kindred souls? There are more things in Heaven and Earth than are dreamed of in our philosophy. We see but through a glass darkly — some time we shall know, and in the mean time I believe.

ON THE BRINGING-UP OF CHILDREN

It has been said that children are a certain trouble and a possible blessing, but the degree to which this is true depends principally upon the parent or bringer-up. For instance, the bachelor uncles or maiden aunts have infallible recipes whereby the child can be warranted perfect. These good people never fail, possibly because they never have the chance to try. Rosamond is allowed to go with perforated shoes regardless of health, and learn her painful lesson of the futility of purple jars, because Miss Edgeworth was a maiden aunt and only played at being Rosamond's mother! The little Franks of the story books and of the bachelor uncles

never beg to sit up at all, but go to bed as if they enjoyed it, precisely on the stroke of the clock, but when the real little boy, with his arms round her neck, begs to stay a little longer, it is quite different, for the mother knows how near the poor little heart was to breaking that afternoon because the dog killed his pet rabbit, and she believes it is much better for him to feel that "mother understands why he can't go to bed quite yet," even if discipline goes to the winds in so doing. But you say sympathy can be shown without breaking rules. Surely it may, but how often is it successfully accomplished, with little children's full and entire appreciation of sympathy, I mean. Discipline is an excellent thing and not lightly to be disregarded, but let us never forget that the discipline was made for

the child, and not the child for the discipline.

Again, the boys would never have dirty hands if the maiden aunts had them in charge — and quite rightly. There is no excuse for being dirty. Dirt is matter out of place, and there should be a place for everything and everything in its place; but sometimes it is an alternative between leaving this dirt where it is or nagging the boy, and is there any question about which is the more important? The dirt will go — sometime even a boy will part with it — but the effect of the nagging may be permanent.

It is a very difficult matter to decide in the bringing up of children how far we should wisely go in disregarding rules; perhaps this is the most difficult one we have to decide in the case of little

children, for education should fit us for life and life is all discipline. Nature is a hard schoolmistress, her laws are inexorable, she does not send some one round with us to see that fingers left in the cracks of doors go unpinched. Is it necessary, therefore, as some parents have affirmed, that we should burn our children just a little in order that they may learn the danger of fire? Might we not as well drown them "just a little" that they may learn the danger of water? Happily most human beings are intelligent enough to learn certain things through the experience of others without too thorough an experiment on their own account. Is it not a sign of intelligence to be able so to learn? And should we not aim rather at encouraging intelligence in children and teaching them to learn through their

minds instead of merely through their bodies? We talk a great deal about every one learning for himself — wild oats, and the like — but as human beings differ from the lower animals exactly in this matter of intelligence, it sometimes seems rather a pity that we do not accentuate the difference a little more. A child responds to what is expected of him; if he is expected to be unreasonable, he is, or rapidly becomes so; but let a child be treated like a reasonable being and most children will rise to the occasion. The infallibility of rules is one of the things no which intelligence should be exercised. No rules that any one can make will be so perfect, so all embracing, that some higher law will not sometimes come in to nullify them. Should the hour of bedtime be so rigid that it must be adhered to

even were the house on fire? That is an absurd idea, of course, nobody could be such a fool as that! — but if one thing interferes with carrying out a law, so may another. I have only taken an extreme instance to show the futility of not breaking rules. The small mind sees the rule and its importance so clearly that it is blinded to the object of the rule — the purpose for which it was made; but let us not through fear of this particular littleness go to the other extreme of disregarding rules until the child feels that they are made only to be broken. It is a very nice course to be steered between the Scylla of red tape on the one hand and the Charybdis of lawlessness on the other, and only to be accomplished successfully by intelligent and large-hearted sympathy, and frequently by explanation

to the child himself. The immutability of law must be learnt by the child; but not at the expense of the sense of sympathy and love — nothing must ever interfere with that.

In past generations parents used to feel that their children owed gratitude to them for the gift of life which they had given them — gratitude, obedience, and service. To-day our views have changed in this as in many things. Are we, perhaps, more honest with ourselves? Knowing that our children are in this world at our pleasure and with no volition of their own, we believe that we owe to them all possible help to fit them for living. But little can be done in the way of fitting life to meet our individual needs and that little is apt to be a failure; much can, however, be done to fit the individual for

life if we begin early enough, and the time to begin is at the beginning.

In bringing up a child the object to be attained is that it should grow up with a sound mind and heart in a sound body fitted to do its work. The soundness of the mind is doubtless of supreme importance, but this is not nearly so likely to be attained, without a corresponding soundness of body, as with it. The child's health, therefore, must be duly watched and its body trained to reach its best development. Health is of great importance to ourselves and to others because our body should be a tool to use, and all tools should be so fitted to their work that they do not take away our attention in the smallest degree from the work itself. The child's physical well-being must, therefore, not only be taken care of, but

he must be taught the laws of health and how to live in accord with them, in order that he may pay due regard to them with the least possible thought given to the matter. Those who constantly think about their health are not usually, as is too often thought, well people who are hipped about themselves, but people who have something wrong with them physically or mentally. Health never thrusts itself on our notice, but it is difficult to keep ill-health from making its presence so constantly felt as to divert our minds from more important matters.

Granted that the child has all we could desire for him on the physical side, what are the spiritual qualities which we most want to develop in him? First the heart, then the sense of duty, and last but not least the intellect — their importance

being in the order named. Love comes first. Love is the fulfilling of the law; those things which are with difficulty done because we believe them to be right are done with ease and some pleasure when love is their incentive. Why make things difficult which might be easy by teaching duty first? If love were really our guiding principle would not all of life be easy? Should we not be prevented on the one hand from mistaking passion for love — that reef on which so many lives have shipwrecked — and on the other from that prudery and priggishness which are of all things the most detestable. What charm love gives to every one! We have all known a few folk whose friendliness goes out to meet you at the first glance, and we have felt their spell. Could we desire for our child a better gift?

Next to love I have put the sense of duty; for though it is a poor second it is a second needed to keep us where we want to be. The child who has learnt to consider others' rights and desires, and its duty toward them, is apt not only to be a satisfactory member of society, but a contented one.

Last to be trained I have put the intellect, because though unsatisfactory alone it must be a guide to everything else. A heart without a head is apt to be somewhat spasmodic. We must be wise in our generation, wise as serpents, if we would be harmless as doves. We must train our children's minds to think — a thing seldom done by most of us — and let us realize that they are never too young to begin, never too young to be treated as reasonable beings. The habit

of looking at things reasonably is an extraordinarily efficient armour, for so much of the charm of evil lies in its unreasonableness, and if the charm be removed have we not also removed much of its temptation, and is not that what we want to do?

The religious teaching given to a child is of the most vital importance, for religion is all-embracing. True religion takes all our knowledge and coördinates it, unifying everything, making it instinct with life. The theology to be taught can be decided only by each individual parent, but every one of us can bring up our children to approach the highest things of life with reverence and love. Happy the child to whom such religion is given.

In all our dealings with them, the important thing and that which we can all

give is sympathy, and always our intimacy; however lacking our bringing-up may be in many things, this will cover a multitude of sins. One thing more, we must ourselves do such things and such things only as we want them to do. With grown people one may, perhaps, say, like the priest to his congregation, "Do what I tell you, not what I do," and if precept does not produce the result the horrible example may, but with children this method will never be successful, for all young things learn by imitation; it is a universal law. How long is this true? How long must we ourselves do things because we want our children to do them? When does the bringing-up process end? When can we, with a clear conscience, do what we sneakingly like and don't admit liking? Our children bring us up

from the moment when the thought of a child of our own first crosses our minds until the day of our death, and it seems somewhat unlikely that they bring us up for a much longer time than we do them, as this would be rather a reversing of the natural order; so it would seem that bringing them up is a never-ending process, or at best that it ends only with life. But we don't like this responsibility! That is very unfortunate for us, for the time to think of this was before we put ourselves into the position of parenthood. There is rather a severe denunciation written of the man who having put his hand to the plough turns back. We have no right to bring children into the world without doing all we can both for them and for the world through them. This is the Law and the Prophets.

We have, moreover, no right to bring children into the world unless there is every reason to believe that they will be fit when they get into it — fit or fitted whichever we choose to call it. Invalids, however inspiring the exceptional ones may be, are nevertheless, as a rule, *iuvalid* for the greater part of the work of the world; and for themselves, poor souls, how sad a thing it must be only to "stand and wait!" — not a place we want to put our children into from any fault of ours. And this leads us to one of the most important matters in the bringing-up of children and the one most commonly overlooked, the teaching them the laws which govern their own existence. The right understanding of these laws brings with it appreciation of their sacredness, and a keener sympathy with the diffi-

culties of human life, and their proper observance involves the highest consideration for others. These results are, of course, only fully realized with maturity, but the knowledge of the parental relation, and the understanding of our personal responsibility toward those to whom we may transmit life, is a thing which a child can grasp and which, once taken in, affects his whole outlook and arms him for the future with the most powerful protection from temptation. A man of spirit is never deterred from anything by the element of personal danger involved in it; on the contrary, there is a spice added to temptation when a man knows he is incurring risk in yielding; it gives him a feeling of courage which, though false, is nevertheless a counterfeit presentment of the real thing and adds zest

instead of taking it away. But let a man realize that through his sin the innocent are likely to suffer, the wife and children for whom he will be responsible, and that this danger may exist for years after the commission of his sin, and he has been given the strongest incentive to resistance that any man can have.

Sin, truly, is inevitably evil, but the sinner is far more often thoughtless and ignorant than intentionally bad, and the cure for this is education of the heart and understanding, beginning in childhood. Habit is one of the greatest forces in the world, and good habits are not so vastly more difficult to acquire than bad ones; indeed, they are sometimes quite as easy. Habits of mind are even more important than habits of body. We all recognize this in regard to the habit of study and

concentration; we realize that if we have taught a child this we have equipped him for the mastering of all intellectual difficulties. The same holds true with regard to other habits of thought. The earlier a man learns to consider other people and their rights and pleasures, the happier he is himself and the happier he makes them. This is true in the little things as well as in the big ones, but nowhere truer than in the relations of the sexes.

There is nothing strange in telling children of these laws of life. With the older children in a family the advent of the younger ones gives the most natural opportunity, but it is not difficult to find suitable occasions. The normal child is constantly talking about what he will do when he has children, always playing house, and at being father and mother.

To tell him the facts is merely to explain things to him which he is naturally curious to know. Of course, this must be done with great care and to it our best thought must be given, but it will repay vastly well all the trouble we can take. Not only will this knowledge give the child an outlook above all selfish ends, and prepare him to steer a straight course through life with its light to guide him, but it will teach him confidence and perfect trust in his parents, and lead him to come to them with his questionings, and so it will shield him from much danger in his early life as well as later. If these things are rightly told the child, there need be no fear of his talking of them to others. Frankness and openness are very desirable about all these matters, but this frankness should not be

practised between children and any but their nearest and dearest, or those who, for one or another reason, have taken that position toward them. Sacred things must be treated sacredly, else we may find that our well-meant efforts have destroyed for our children some of the sanctity of life. We must not be afraid to tell things to children lest they repeat them, for the child who is trusted becomes the trustworthy child; we can all remember in our own childhood our gratitude to those who trusted us and knew that we would never repeat anything they said to us, or in our presence. When you think of it, what a strange idea it is of ours, that children will repeat what they overhear. It is one of those ideas that reflect on the possessor. If a child is made to understand that what it is told, or

what it hears others talking about, is not a matter for repetition, that child will be more careful than the average grown person in what it tells to others. A child's pride in being trusted is a very strong incentive to him to deserve confidence.

In all such ways the understanding of children is quite the equal of their elders, if they have been allowed to develop through honest dealing. No intelligent child, for instance, thinks less well of its parents because it finds that they do not know everything, unless it has been deceived into thinking they do; in that case the rude awakening must come, and with a clever child, very early, and fortunate, indeed, will be the parent who does not, in this awakening, lose his child's respect. We belittle a child's intelligence when we fear that he will think less well

of us because we must answer his questions by a confession of ignorance. So long as we try to learn the answer later and give it to him, he will respect us all the more for our honesty.

But all of these things lead us back to the point which is most important. They all centre in the absolute need of intimacy between parents and children, first, last, and all the time. Intimacy in their plays and in their work, intimacy in everything they do and everything they care about. The parents with large families of fairly intelligent children have an opportunity in this way to become really quite well versed in the different phases of human activity! There is no education equal to it, and it would be hard to say which was most benefited by it, parent or child. It makes no difference

what our natural aptitudes are, we cannot take refuge in saying that we have no capacity for such and such things; if we haven't it by nature, we must cultivate it at least enough to be able to sympathize if we cannot do more. Even an inferior parent, if he be intimate with his child, will do better by him than a superior mortal who holds himself aloof. It takes a very low person, indeed, not to want to do the best he can for the child with whom he is intimate. Let us share with our children the best we have, whether our riches be of the head or heart (the latter are the more important); let us make them our intimates, and we shall develop with them together into people who are better worth while.

ON HOME

THE French have been accused of not possessing what we call home because they do not express it in one word as we do. They say "with us" when they mean "home." Can we do more for our friends than to ask them to come and share "with us," to be "among us," where we are all together. If any one doubts the quality of the French welcome or of the French home, let him read Joyce Kilmer's little Essay called "Holy Ireland." A more touching description of the welcome of home it would be hard to find.

What misuse among ourselves is often made of this our peerless word. How often we hear people, newcomers to a

neighborhood who can know nothing as yet of their neighbors' lives, speak of the "beautiful homes" surrounding them in the countryside or in the near-by city. They can refer only to the shells which lodge these homes, homes which, alas! sometimes resemble but slightly the beauty of the exterior.

Home is an atmosphere which pervades everything — fills every cranny of the abiding place. It is large enough to fill a palace and it is unhampered in the confines of a hovel. It is the spirit of liberty, of law, of love. This atmosphere comes not from the place, it is a condition; and yet, in order that we may have this condition something material must go with it — we must be somewhere when we feel that we have "come home." Somewhere, yes, but the where is of so

little consequence. If only we were pure spirit, it would all be so simple; but the reconciliation of the spirit with the flesh — there's the trouble! To go just so far in cleanliness, in order, and in beauty, as to make home a place of rest and of refreshment, and yet never to overstep the line and lose the atmosphere of home in our efforts to secure its material helps!

Home must, if possible, be clean — for cleanliness is next to Godliness; and yet our cleanliness must often be subordinated to other things — to Godliness, for instance. The man who is not allowed to bring a speck of mud into the house has an excellent housekeeper for wife, but is she Mary or only Martha? Again, though she may not nag her husband through her carefulness, her own serenity may suffer from overwork. Perhaps she

cannot help this, for the children must be cared for and the family fed and kept clean — and there is no one to help — but often the trouble lies in conscience so overdeveloped on the material side that no time is left to see those things which are the more important.

Home-making is really woman's prerogative — men alone find it next to impossible to make a home. But home-making, like everything else worth doing, requires much time and much thought and constant readjustment. A house loses the atmosphere of home if it is empty most of the time, and yet to-day the mother must go out into the world and know its temptations and its opportunities if she would have not only "a heart at leisure from itself to soothe and sympathize," but be the guide to lift up,

to strengthen, and to inspire those who look to her. The atmosphere of home which should pervade the whole household depends upon the mother — whether the household be large or small, whether it consist only of the family, or whether others, too, belong under its roof. There is no servant problem to the woman who considers her household as a whole, and gives to every one in it the place and the consideration due them, exacting the same consideration from each for all.

An upbringing in such a home is the best preparation men and women can have for living lives which shall leave the world a better place because of them. When every mother makes for her household such a home, the world will hold many fewer problems needing solution.

ON MOTHERS-IN-LAW

Poor mothers-in-law! What abuse is heaped upon them! Are they wholly deserving of it? Do they even deserve it at all? Presumably they must at one time have been in considerable numbers as meddlesome and mischief-making as literature paints them. So much smoke does not issue from a cold chimney, but I am sure it is not now true — indeed, this is one of the most delightful relationships in life. I have tried it in both directions so I know of what I speak.

The mother-in-law is one of the few people who always reaps what others have sown and reaps it of right. Her children-in-law are brought up before they become hers. She never has to

exercise any of the disagreeable coercion which is necessary at certain times in youth even in the most perfect relation of mother to child. She has simply to enjoy.

The name has a somewhat cold sound, suggestive of lack of heart — but does not that show a mistaken point of view? The law is not a mere cold abstraction; quite the contrary, it is an effort to standardize and stabilize human relations and a terror only to the evil doer — indeed, "love is the fulfilling of the law."

If she is not all she ought to be to her children-in-law, the fault is primarily with her, just as it is in the case of the children whom she has borne. With the latter the first innings are clearly hers, but this is almost equally true with the former. The young man just engaged is

such an engaging creature — so open-hearted, so eager to be loved and welcomed by those belonging to and responsible for the "one and only woman." The young engaged girl is equally entrancing, but with her the coming into a strange family is somewhat more difficult. She is shy, reticent, and a little fearful of the future. The new family stand, of necessity, in a very different relation to the prospective bride from that in which they stand to the bridegroom to be, and she is very hungry for their approving love and needs to have it shown. I am sure this is true of even the sophisticated young woman of the present day, for human nature has not really changed except superficially although to us older people it sometimes seems strangely different. Of course we must not pour

caresses on one to whom they are distasteful, but there are ample ways of showing appreciation and understanding affection without caresses, and by patience and observation we can find the right way. It is different in every case.

But how hard it is for us New Englanders to show how much we feel! We are so afraid of a rebuff, of not being met halfway! Ah! "there's the rub" — our self-consciousness! We are pleased to call it shyness, for that is a nicer name, but if we would look facts in the face it is only a form of self-love. Our Puritan forebears had many fine qualities, but they were everlastingly wise in their own conceits.— "Those who set small store by themselves are slow to take offence."— But it surely can't be offence that we feel, for it is a dull ache right in the middle of

our being, in the place we call our heart because the organ of that name lives there! And yet this ache would not be there at all if we were not thinking more of how we feel than of how the other person may feel. "*But* for the failure of love on our part, therefore, is all our trouble."

The old saying runs

> "My son is my son
> Till he gets him a wife."

But that was in the days when mothers-in-law were meddling. Did they like to be advised when they were young, whether they asked for the advice or not? I misdoubt it. The verse should run

> "My son's most my son
> When he's got him a wife" —

for as the new problems come to him he sympathizes so much more with yours than he has known how to before — and

if advice is not given away gratuitously it is striking how, like everything else, it rises in value.

And here I am back at the beginning again with the statement that a mother-in-law's is one of the most delightful relationships in life. You acquire as by magic twice as many children as you had before — and such nice children, for they are the choice of your children whose tastes you have done your best to mould!

Well! Don't get too conceited if everything is rose-coloured — perhaps you had nothing to do with it after all.

ON GRANDCHILDREN

GRANDCHILDREN are like the sunshine; they just come. You make no effort, but suddenly a delightful sense of warmth pervades you — that is the grandchild.

Grandchildren are of two kinds, male and female — at first very similar, but later developing marked differences. These differences appear quite early and must be noted; they can, however, be foretold by the observant grandparent. Other differences there are which cannot be foretold, but are quite as important to note. Every grandchild has two parents, four grandparents, eight great-grandparents, sixteen great-greats, and so on *ad infinitum*. In Mah Jong a limit is put on the scores which by this doubling

process mount to unimaginable heights, but no arbitrary limit can fix the number of qualities inherited from these innumerable ancestors by grandchildren, and they mix so oddly! We recognize the ones we ourselves have, and sometimes we are very sorry for the poor mite bound to do battle all its life as we have had to, sorry with a great sympathy and longing to make life easier than it has been for us. Sometimes the traits remind us of the forebears whom we have known. Sometimes they are utterly strange — an undiscovered country — and which is the most interesting, it would be hard to say.

Grandchildren can be observed with so much more detachment than children. The things annoying to parents touch the grandparent with a whimsical amused

sympathy for both sides — the annoyer and annoyed.

There is a delightful sense of irresponsibility concerning grandchildren, and yet somehow a wondrously pleasant feeling of responsibility too. The drudgery of discipline in upbringing belongs on parents' shoulders. How pleasant that we must in no wise interfere — must stand aloof! There is something in the fact that one is not a principal in the drama which makes one's position in the wings a vantage-ground for observation, a place from which one can emerge when the cue is given. And one must be ready to recognize the cue when it comes. Grandparents can be both "Parents' Assistants" and "Youth's Companions."

It sometimes seems as if alternate generations had more in common than

adjoining ones. The very lack of responsibility helps in this as in so much else. Grandparents are not so busy as parents and in their leisure they make good playmates. They learnt to read some time ago, and that is a useful accomplishment too, and they can tell stories and listen. Listening is so important. And if they do all these things well, perhaps some day they will grow to be the real friends of the grandchildren that they want to be.

ON TWINS

LIFE is lonely for most of us. We come into the world alone. We pass through it alone, we leave it alone. No other human being however dear can share these experiences with us. Others can look on, they can love us and long to help us, but they cannot share them with us — nor can we with them. But for twins it is different. They have shared everything from the beginning. All the great and little circumstances affecting that marvellous period of development before birth, which are different in every other case, for them are the same. Born as nearly as possible together, with only minutes of separation, their surroundings again become alike. How blessed to be a twin!

To have another being so closely bound up with one's life, another soul from which to draw inspiration, another heart in which to rest — another life with which from the beginning to share one's best.

But one twin so often dies, and then what of the other left to live alone, so much more lonely than an ordinary child who has never known this oneness of two souls? Even if his twin has died so early that memory recalls no exact image, there is an intangible something, an ache, a void where fullness should be. To those whom these things do not concern, all this seems like the visions of the night, simply imagination, but those who have themselves experienced it — and they are many — know of its reality.

This sense of loneliness is hardest to

bear in childhood and adolescence. It is so poignant to the young soul which cries out for sympathy and understanding and does not know how to satisfy its craving. If it tried to explain and seek help, the chances are that those around would not understand; but it could not explain, for it does not know itself just what is wrong.

As the responsibilities of life increase with manhood and womanhood, they seem to weigh more heavily than they should. There seems more to be done, the burdens of two lives to be shouldered; for one must bear the other's part as well as his own — the two are inseparable. However happy life may be, there is always in the heart a gap — something that is not filled. And all this suffering is just because one does not understand — one does not know.

But as life deepens, as sorrows and joys come crowding in on us thick and fast, and the whirling current of life lands us perhaps in a backwater where we can but lie and think and feel, it begins to dawn on us that this which we have thought to be only suffering was really a deeper insight; that the pain that came of this sense of loss was the birth throe of a deeper spiritual oneness; that whereas we had felt the burden to be greater and the strength less than that of others, in reality the opportunities were greater and the strength was the strength of two — and so again we can say for both "How blessed to be twins!"

ON THE DEATH OF MRS. BELL

October 1918

THE many tributes to Mrs. Bell, beautiful though they are, yet speak of her as if she had gone. I want to add one word to them by saying that those whom she loved she could not leave. In this life she could never have left her friends to mourn alone — she would and did go to them in their troubles, great and small, and it is not to me conceivable that she should be obliged, in that other life beyond what we can see, to act less kindly to those who love her. Her spirit is ever present, giving its abundant sympathy to all human beings, strengthening and vivifying those of us who had the privilege of her friendship — and so it must be to the end.

ON IMPROVEMENTS

THE world is really growing very old and some of its ways are utterly old-fashioned and indeed how can they help being so when they have gone on unchanged for hundreds and thousands of years! No really modern person will be able to stand them much longer, however, and it seems as if the time had come at last for those of us who think, to get together and remodel them.

Look at them from the point of view of efficiency, for instance. We are all very much interested in efficiency. We know that we make two or three times as many motions as are necessary in everything we do. We know this because we have been taught it, and told how to

make only the necessary number; we are being taught, too, how to eat and sleep and breathe in the most efficient way.

But this poor old world has had nobody to teach it; it just jogs on making all its unnecessary motions, starting over again with every child who comes into it, letting him begin just as ignorant and inexperienced as his predecessors and just as incapable of learning from any one else's experience. Think what waste is here! Efficiency would counsel a very different procedure. There should be some method whereby this would be made impossible.

Take, for instance, a matter of universal experience, our birth and upbringing. We are all born — or certainly one in each family is born — to perfectly inexperienced parents, and the rest of us

fare little better. When our parents were brought up they were children and incapable of observing the process, and besides it was too close, too personal for them to be able to form an unprejudiced opinion, anyway. The result of this process we all know, and a thoroughly inefficient one it is. Nevertheless, we in our turn repeat it with our children, and so it goes on from generation to generation, always the same. Now, how much better it would be if this could all be changed; if we could start our career as grandparents, for instance! In this capacity we could observe with ripened intelligence the bringing-up of children without having any responsibility as to the outcome, and with the leisure that comes to the properly constituted grandparent we could ponder improvements to be put into

effect when our own turn came. (We sometimes do this now, but our observations are not fruitful!) This would not only be of incalculable benefit to our children who would profit enormously by our knowledge of the way in which they should be trained, but just think what a wonderful improvement it would make in us personally! How we could help our parents to bring us up when we finally arrived at that stage, instead of thwarting them as we often do now! What a simplification of life for them! And how much more useful people we ourselves should be throughout our lives! This is one of the ways in which efficiency can be developed.

A second means of simplification would be by a new form of banking, applying the principle now in use with regard to

money to another medium, namely, time. We lose a great deal of time at present unavoidably. We have measles and mumps and whooping cough when we are children, and, even if we are not really ill, people are afraid of us, and later when we have outgrown such childish things, typhoid fever and appendicitis and pneumonia lie in wait to straiten still further our small inheritance; besides the little daily matters of sick-headaches and colds. It has been recently estimated that even this last insignificant disability squanders several days of our precious life for us every year. Why should we let this happen any longer? Hundreds of years ago we established the principle of a medium of exchange, and since then it has made no difference whether we pay back to our creditor the very piece of money we

borrowed from him or some other. In fact if he is up-to-date in sanitary matters he decidedly prefers the clean new bill we have just drawn out of the bank. Why not carry out this principle in regard to our time? Suppose we wake up some morning with a sick headache; we simply send our choreman round to the bank with a cheque for that day, and, depositing it bodily, pass on to the next, by which means we not only lose the pain of the headache, but we have one day to the good for future use. Of still more value would this be in the case of a long illness. Three weeks, six weeks, perhaps, to our credit for a time when we are peculiarly busy with more to do than we have days for, or a delightful European vacation to be lengthened out. The charm of this is readily apparent. The

building in which the bank is established would have to be of peculiar construction, for, of course, it would require a large disinfecting chamber with facilities for using superheated steam to kill the more pestilential and virulent germs, as all time drawn out must, of course, be free from mental and physical trouble. But these difficulties could readily be met without prohibitive expense.

The benefits of this system for the poor and the indolent would be enormous, for the terms which their time could command would doubtless increase yearly in amount as the appreciation of its value increased. The busy and the gay would buy more and more as time went on, the first to increase their opportunities for work, the latter to spend in play, and the indolent need but to barter their surplus and

pass on to the next week or month or year. What existence could be more simple!

Of course the difficulty instantly occurs to one — suppose the man who has sold you his next year dies before it is over — how horribly cheated you would be! That would show the folly of buying on credit; but even then you could have the remedy of the law in this as in all other business transactions, and we all know that nothing can be more satisfactory than that!

How it would revolutionize things! No more boredom! To the prosy friend you say, "Excuse me a minute!" write a cheque and the hour is gone. Gone and yet not gone — much better than gone — waiting for the pleasant moment which you so want to prolong!

A few little things remain to be adjusted in this matter and then the system

will be complete. We haven't all the same amount of money and don't all spend it in the same way, and it makes no trouble except for those who haven't as much as the others! There seems, therefore, no reason why we should all have the same amount of time or distribute it in the same way. Probably the entire understanding of the fourth dimension is all that is required in order to bring the system into working order, and that is undoubtedly very near, indeed.

These are merely suggestions of easily imagined improvements in the working of the world, bringing it up to the most modern thought. Many others will immediately suggest themselves to the reader, of an equally desirable and feasible nature. The regulation of the temperature, for instance — we have done

this in our houses and large places of public resort, why not do it in our back yards and in the great outdoors? I would not advocate reducing our New England climate to the sameness of the tropics, but merely tempering its somewhat disconcerting extremes, taking twenty degrees off of the days above ninety degrees and dividing them among some of those frigid June days when we wonder whether if the vegetation had more self-regard it would not quit work altogether and retire whence it came. The danger of bringing about monotony in our climate need cause no anxiety, I am sure — for, as Mark Twain said in his essay on the New England weather, we have plenty here to "hire out"; in fact, it seems as if we ought to spell it "whether." Besides, our best efforts would probably meet

with but imperfect success. I once passed several August days in one of the hottest cities in the Middle West in a hotel which was artificially cooled. The ventilators in the elevator shafts and elsewhere were screwed down that the system might have perfect play. It had! — and on going out into the naturally heated streets one felt the sun-bathed air as a refreshing coolness. This plan of regulation is, therefore, not to be feared because of its too great perfection.

There is one more reform which is already nearly in working order, but the need for which cannot be brought before the public too soon. It is the desirability of having all candidates for public office, whether appointive or elective, absolutely ignorant of the subject in which they are in the future to protect the

public interests. This is conducive to open-mindedness. Knowledge is likely to prejudice a man either for or against certain methods, and it is believed that the reform here advocated will correct this tendency. Moreover, a man of strong opinions, especially when these are founded on fact, is liable to be annoying to a certain class of citizens, whereas a man with no opinions of his own is much more generally pleasing.

These few suggestions are made with the hope that all who have the welfare of the world at heart and want to make it a more modern and up-to-date place to live in will get together as soon as possible to form an International Trust Company for the Complete Change of Everything that has Ever Existed.

ON COURAGE

COURAGE is a wonderful quality, but hard to define. We cannot do it with the glibness of the schoolmarm whose definition of taciturnity I learnt in childhood at my grandmother's knee. The pupil on inquiring the meaning of the term received as answer from the pedagogic lips, "Taciturnity is a quality as ineligible as excessive narration, for it dehominates those qualities which are obliterated by its excessive umbragiousness and involves the comprehension in the inextricable mazes of internality." Not unnaturally the pupil replied, "Thanks, Madam, you rather illustrate than elucidate my agricolate faculties."

Definitions, however complete, may

fail sometimes in satisfactorily defining, and illustrations likewise, but is not the conduct of a little group of gilliflowers in my garden a really excellent illustration of courage? These delicate flowers are blossoming gaily to-day, December 10th, although they met with a terrible rebuff some three weeks ago in a hard frost one night. My special flower garden is high and is thereby delivered from the frosts of early autumn which blight the lower gardens so depressingly early. The frost that struck my gilliflowers was a very real one, and the next morning I thought them gone. They bent over as if so burdened with the cares of life that they were about to lay them down. But bravely they rallied, and now are as gay as ever, nodding in the fresh south wind. It requires no courage to face dangers of

whose existence you have no suspicion, but to go on living gaily when you know that danger and death are close at hand — this takes courage, indeed. Oh, grand little gilliflowers!

What a lot of courage it takes just to live. To get out of bed of a cold morning, for instance — bed is so warm, the tub so cold, and the outdoor world still colder! What courage it takes to go through with the day's work and smile, when you are so tired that every bone in your body aches with its own special twinge of pain! This form of courage is common to every one except Sybarites. We all practise it; indeed, the world could not go on without it. It is no peculiar virtue, but not the less to be admired because it is universal.

Those who run away from danger through fear are happily in the minority

and heartily despised by their fellows. The man who has always been the object of ridicule because of his saying to his wife when a burglar was thought to be in the house, "You open the door, my dear, and I'll shoot," was not really the coward that he seemed. The door behind which his wife stood as she opened it must have shielded her much better than it did him. The men who slink away in battle are not common. How comparatively easy it is to have courage in time of danger — the very immediate need calls it forth, it is a form of self-protection. Even when the danger is not to us and we run very great personal risk to save others, as in fire or flood, for instance, the touch of the God in us all rises to meet the call.

The courage of bearing the daily grind of pain with the gaiety with which many

brave souls bear it is not so easy, for there is here no sudden call to stimulate, no evident heroism to be admired by all — which does help, although at the time we may not be conscious of it. How much greater than even this high courage is that required to face for those we love years of suffering, and worse, of incapacity, with nothing to hope for but death as a release. The bravest woman I ever knew looked this in the face for years,— lived with it as her constant companion. She and her husband faced it, together, for him, and which bore up most bravely it would be hard to say; but every one who knew them has felt the influence of their courage throughout their own lives, and taken up their burdens more faithfully because of these two brave souls.

What a good old form of words, and

how much it means to say that a man has "the courage of his convictions." It does take courage to stand by your convictions when every one in sight is against you. When misunderstanding and scorn are sure to follow, and probably, also, that which is far harder to bear, the loss of the opportunity to accomplish what your heart was set on — the very opportunity which had been yours until that came up to which you could not yield. It might be all right for others — they looked at it all so differently; yielding for you would not be merely bending your will, but stooping to that to which you could not stoop — so it could not be done. Not the easiest thing involved in showing this kind of courage is that, to those who are not of your way of thinking, you only appear to be a "crank" —

"impossible." Do eels really "get used to skinning," I wonder, and do those whose fate is to see things as others do not see them find it any easier after repeated experiences? Does it require any less courage as time passes to hold out? I think it must, because the world does in time come to understand — for "Humanity sweeps onward." Cheer up! Keep up your courage! Carry on!

ON TOOLS

THE better the workman the better his tools, for pride in his work calls for the best. The old saying, "'Tis a poor workman that quarrels with his tools," I take to mean that the poor workman tries to shunt the blame for his own poor work on his tools — always a pleasanter thing to do than to shoulder it one's self, and quite safe in this case, for they can't protest.

All we do is done with tools, from the needle and thread, the steam drill and turbine, to the press and public opinion. It pays to have our tools right. A defective railroad engine, brakes which will not stop our automobile in time, may land us where the best tools will not avail us to finish our work. When we

stop ascribing accidents to the Lord's all-wise Providence and allot them where they belong, to man's all-foolish improvidence, we shall have fewer of them. We are just as responsible for not having our tools in proper condition as for failure to be on our job in any other way.

This is quite as true in the case of the most important tool of all — our body; and yet there are so many poor workmen who make this tool a cause for quarrelling and in so many different ways, from the athlete who keeps his body up to concert pitch so long that he unfits it for future usefulness, to the ascetic and the libertine who abuse it in other directions. These all are or become slaves of their bodies, not its masters—a master gives orders, he does not receive them — moreover, a wise master protects his servants' welfare.

The line is not particularly finely drawn between making a fetish of the body and keeping it a fit tool to use. Our machines work so much better if they are kept well oiled and if sand is not permitted to get into the gears! indeed, with reasonable care they can be kept in running order a very long time. But if sand has got into the gears we shall lose much less time in the long run if we stop work altogether until we have got it out. The sand not only hinders, it more or less permanently injures the machine.

Of course, if we thought this was true in our own case, we should always take the proverbial stitch, for one means so much less work than the subsequent nine or more taken later. It is far less disagreeable to be laid up for one day than for nine days, for one month than for

nine, but, of course, we always think that we can go ahead and "get away" with it and skip even the one stitch, and we often can; that is what makes it so hard. It seems sometimes that Nature lets you break her laws almost indefinitely, and then for no worse offence than usual, to your way of thinking, down she comes on you with the past load added to the present, and there is nothing for it but to dig yourself out from under as best you may, and be thankful for such success as you may achieve. As a friend once said under similar circumstances, "Your body is an awfully mean thing — it always hits you when you're down."

There is one vast difference, however, between our bodily machine and the mechanical contrivances devised by us. Our body can be made to work by sheer

will power when it is in such bad shape that a similarly damaged machine driven by steam or electricity would stop functioning altogether. All glory to those noble souls who have gone on doing their work when it seemed that their tool was past use. Thank God! there have been many such. I do not urge the quitting of our work just because our bodies fail, until the soul fails, too, but only keeping them, if possible, in such condition that we can go on working with soul and body well held together.

ON CHILDREN PLAYING

As I have been sitting in my living-room reading, through this Sunday afternoon, one of the pleasantest sounds in the world has constantly broken in on my attention — the sound of happy healthy boys at play on the grass of the old parade ground in the Common — little boys and bigger boys — boys for whom there was no room in the big playground near Park Square. Of course, they hurt the grass — the green sward becomes a mottled brown — but what of that. Is not the health of boys more important than the health of grass, and as to a city's boast of beauty, can all the well-kept lawns in Christendom compare in beauty with that of a citizenry of contented, vigorous young

manhood? The open spaces in the city are all too few for the children now; do not let us curtail them by ever so little.

We cannot have everything we want in life, for one thing frequently precludes another, as in this instance. The grass would certainly be very charming, but if we cannot have them both, give us the children.

ON REAL PEOPLE

PEOPLE are of many sorts, almost as many as we are ourselves. They are long and short and fat and thin — and white and brown and black and yellow and red — and sometimes at sea they look green or feel blue, so they are really quite various.

As to characteristics people have more of these than they have colours. Some are pleasant and some not so pleasant; indeed, some are not pleasant at all. Some attract us the first time we see them, and some never attract us no matter how many times we see them; in fact the less we see them, the more possible it seems to be attracted by them. Fortunately they doubtless feel in the

same way about us, so that in shunning their society we need have no qualms lest we be depriving them of pleasure.

Then there are real people and not real people and some wholly sham people. Sham people are not very dangerous because they are sure to be found out, and unless they are abominably clever that generally happens pretty soon.

But how many not real people there are! People who do not seem to have any ideals except when such ideals are fashionable. It is from these people that great preachers and great leaders get their largest following, and it is well this should be so, for under such influence the not real people may develop into real ones. Alas! however, they are equally the prey of cranks if the crank can make himself the fashion, which he often can; and

this explains much of the imaginary strength brought out in support of all sorts of fads. Mobs can be so easily stampeded into endorsing anything because the largest number of those composing them are sure to be of the class of not real people. To this class belong the people who boast (at suitable moments) of their exploits in smuggling and like acts of falsehood and lawlessness, which unfortunately have not yet been made unfashionable. They are the people who have always in the back of their heads the thought of how any course of action will affect them personally before throwing in their lot with it; and consequently they are generally to be found sitting on the top rail of the fence so that it may be equally easy to flop to either side.

But happily, when we have enumerated

all the kinds of not real people and got our mind clear of them, we find emerging from its depths all the dear kind stay-at-home people who quietly stand to their guns through everything, not realizing what heroic deeds they do because they do them so naturally without ever being bothered to think of how it will affect themselves. Then there are those loyal friends whose trust in us is so strong that they keep us always at our best, and so make us better. What people to tie to they are, as real as the rock of Gibraltar! Those people whom we know we shall always find holding to the highest standards, whether it be in carrying on the government, in business matters, or in their private lives, are the most real of all. They are far from common, but when we find them they

make up for all the disappointments encountered along the way. It is delightful to see the conscious and unconscious homage rendered to them all along the line — sometimes slow in coming, but sure to come to those who endure to the end.

The real people are the ones who keep the world true and strong and a place worth living in, and loving, and giving to of the best that we have.

ON AMERICAN CITIZENSHIP

America stands for "liberty under the law." Americans believe that only through obedience to the law can liberty exist. Liberty is protected and made safe by law.

Teaching American citizenship means making everybody understand, not only the privileges, but the duties which belong to every American no matter where he was born. All the people in America, men and women and children, share these privileges and these duties. It is this that makes us a united democracy. The native-born American is apt to feel himself superior by right of birth, yet America does not stand for such superiority, but rather for superiority by right of what a man is himself.

We should be wise to restrict immigration to those who desire, and who can properly become, American citizens — but once admitted they should be made welcome. Can we suppose a man likes to be met by committees of people at every turn who tell him they want to Americanize him? Yet there scarcely exists an organization to-day without such a committee; and how many of these committees have studied the background of the different races? Were we to go to China to live, would it ingratiate us to be told on every side that we were to be made into Chinese? We know that we have much to bring to China in spite of the youth of our civilization. The men and women who come here from other lands know the same of their possible gift to us. There is no Anglo-Saxon, whatever his present

nativity, who is not proud of the Magna Charta as his own heritage; and every man who is worthy to be an American citizen has pride in his race also. If we permit immigration, it is our part to know the different races, their past, their pride, their possibilities, and to make those who come over feel that we know them. This would gladden our hearts if we were in a foreign land, and it makes the foreigner here glad too.

It is not only in large things that we can get help from our citizens of foreign birth; in the domestic matters of daily life there is much in the training of children by which our American mothers might profit. Take the matter of food, for instance. In the foreign household the children are taught to eat what is set before them, and one dish of meat and vegetables served

together is provided for the whole family (I am, of course, not speaking of plates, but of the general platter) at a saving of expense and a gain both in quality of food and of self-control in the child. Foreigners spend a larger proportion of their outlay on food than native-born Americans, and yet they spend actually much less. The average Polish family of five lives, and lives well, on less than half the price paid for food by the average American family of the same size.

If those who have come from other lands to make America their home could feel that we want the help which they can give us, it would tend more than anything else to make them love the land of their adoption. This is good psychology. The more we know ourselves to be needed, the happier we are. It is not

getting for ourselves, but giving of ourselves, that makes us love those with whom we live. These are fundamentals of human nature which underlie all differences of race. We must feel ourselves to be a cog in the wheel — we must fit into the scheme of things in order to be content.

It is well for all who come here from other lands to learn to speak and to read English because we can better understand one another if we use the same language. It is better still to coöperate one with another in learning and in teaching true democracy, that in our efforts we may work shoulder to shoulder in mutual helpfulness — no matter who does the work so long as it be well done.

Among American citizens there is no distinction of race, no distinction of class; all are Americans together; each one is a

member of the American democracy whose spirit President Coolidge has defined as "the call to duty, the pledge of fortune and of life, nobility of character through nobility of action: this is true Americanism."

ON CROSSING STREETS AT NIGHT

How fearsome a thing it is to cross the street at night! We seem to have gone back to the days of Saint George, or rather to the days of his formidable antagonist without the help of a Saint George to conquer him. The dragon's burning eyes both fascinate and blind you as he bears down on you belching forth steam, and behind him come more and ever more, so that success seems assured to them in the end. Your only help is in the brave young bearer of Saint Andrew's cross, who stands midway in the stream, staying the tide sometimes for a moment that poor wayfarers may pass in safety to the other shore.

But many passages there are without guard of the cross, and what of them? In attempting these one thinks of the answer of the conductor to the timid soul in the railroad going up Mount Washington, who questioned him as to what would happen in case something broke. When he had elaborated on the number of safety devices which would act one after the other in case of need, she said again, "And where, conductor, should we go to in case all these failed?" His answer was, "That, Madam, would depend upon your past life." So we, remembering, take our life in our hands, and hope it has been better than we think.

ON DEMOCRACY

PASTEUR said that the equality of a democracy is equality in the opportunity to serve. That is a very beautiful definition, and I am inclined to think it is not only the most beautiful, but the truest that can be given.

No one understanding anything of the laws of heredity can believe that men are born free and equal. None of us are born equal — and but few are born even measurably free. Our inheritance helps or hinders us at every turn. I am not, of course, speaking of the inheritance of material things from which circumstances might deprive us, but of qualities of mind and character which are inherent in us from our past — that which has made us as we are.

In America we have done what we could to make men equal by education, but we all know that the capacity to absorb education is the really important thing and that is quite unequally distributed. How much more worth while some people are even with little or no education than are others turned out letter perfect from our schools.

Again, we have tried to bring about equality by giving every citizen a vote. It is equality certainly so far as it goes, but the vote goes so little way in benefiting the individual, for only in the aggregate can votes accomplish anything. Which does not mean that it is unimportant whether we vote or not. We must put in our grain of cement else we injure the whole structure, but it is of benefit to the structure rather than to

the grain. To us personally the vote is rather the sign manual of duty done than of good received. It is, as Pasteur said, an opportunity to serve by using our vote for the good of the whole community.

The inheritance of wealth is one of those accidents of inequality inevitable in a democracy — for a democracy means freedom under law. It is an asset both to the State and to its possessor, if he is of large enough calibre to be its master, but is an unmitigated liability to both if he become its slave. In a democracy this inequality of circumstance, if evil in its results, is more likely to be righted than under any other form of government, for there is more equality of opportunity for ability — and ability, if such be its desire, means, in time, wealth.

Complete equality will always be

impossible just as similarity is impossible except in things made by machine. If all the property in the world were divided equally between all the people in the world, their inherent inequalities would promptly redistribute it again. The nearest approach to equality which can be attained and preserved is equality of opportunity for service, but equality does not mean similarity.

Those who benefit by the freedom of this great democracy are stewards of this freedom, and "it is required of stewards that a man be found faithful" without regard to how little or how much it be, but "unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required." The amount, however, does not matter so long as we give our best, each one of us, to the service of our country.

ON MEMORIAL DAY

ORIGINALLY set aside in memory of those who gave their lives that this country might be kept united and through union grow great, this day has become the Memorial Day also of our sons who died to preserve, not only our freedom, but the freedom of all nations! and not for them alone, but for the countless thousands who have lived that the lives of others might be the better. Some trod paths that have become the great highways of the world; the paths of others lead to the fireside of home. To-day is the day to keep in memory all these humble, all these loving, all these heroic dead, to honor them in our hearts and so to live ourselves that they may not have died in vain.

ON MEMORIAL DAY

When we decorate to-day the graves of our soldiers and of all our brave dead, it will be a comfort to many and an inspiration to all to realize that the graves of those who gave their lives in France are there being made beautiful by loving, grateful hands, and that it has been determined by those who live in our great sister republic that no Memorial Day shall ever pass without this service of love. It must bind together for all time two great peoples.

No nation can be great without great memories, and the greatest of all memories for any nation is the recognition of the nobility of the men and women who have contributed to her greatness.

THE END

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